1:Srinivas E-5 (1940-42)1952 AW5 Coorg AW5

mortar, with solid, carved woodwork. Masons and carpenters from Malabar build them, and Coorg ancestral houses consequently resemble greatly the houses of well-to-do Nāyars. The house is usually situated on an elevation, and a narrow, high-walled and winding lane (*ōṇi*) leads up to it. From the windows in the upper story one usually obtains a fine view of the surrounding country. Formerly, in the days when feuds, or *kuḍupi* (*kuḍippaka* in Malayāḷam), between joint families were common, and a surprise raid (*kaḷḷa paḍé*) from a hostile *okka* was always a possibility, anyone coming with unfriendly intentions exposed himself to view from the windows of the ancestral house. The house was built like a fortress and was able to stand a siege for several days.

The ancestral estate usually includes an extent of jungle, some grazing land, and valleys in which rice is grown. The jungle provided the household with the necessary timber and fuel. A part of the jungle is reserved for burying or cremating the dead members of the *okka*. There is a kitchen-garden near the main building. A well or pond provides water for domestic purposes.

Every house includes an ancestor-shrine or ancestor-platform. Uncarved stones, representing cobra-deities, are planted on platforms built around the trunk of a milk-exuding tree. There may also be other uncarved stones representing minor deities like Pūda and Guḷika.

According to Lewis Rice,[1] in the seventies of the last century the Coorg *okka* frequently consisted of twenty or thirty, and occasionally even fifty members, all residing under one roof. He further tells us that previous to the invasion of Coorg by Tippu Sultan in the latter half of the eighteenth century, it was not uncommon to find in a house thirty or forty adult male relatives living together. Many *okkas* seem to have had 120 to 150 people, all living in the ancestral house.

Nowadays the *okka* commonly consists of two or three generations of agnatically-related males, their wives, and their children. Girls born in the *okka* go out on marriage as residence is patrilocal, but it sometimes happens that a woman remains unmarried for a variety of reasons. In such a case she stays in her natal *okka*. An *okka* also includes the widow of a deceased member. As mentioned earlier, leviratic unions are preferred amongst Coorgs, and a widow

[1] *Mysore and Coorg*, Bangalore, 1878, vol. iii, p. 329.

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

000 masts. By its side may be seen the black Dammer tree or
137 (*Can.*) Dúppa-mara (Canarium strictum) which attains a great
314 height and may be recognised at a distance by the peculiar red colour of its foliage. The resin obtained from this tree has a brilliant black lustre, when adhering to the ash colored bark, but when held up to the light, it is of a rich brownish yellow tint.

Another resin producing tree is the white Dammer tree (Vateria indica). When an incision is made into the bark of this tree and fire applied to it, the charred trunk yields an increased quantity of the fluid resin.

The Calophyllum inophyllum or Alexandrian Laurel supplies a fragrant resin, and from the seeds is extracted by pressure the Pinnay oil of commerce.

The beautiful order *Guttifera* is also frequently represented by at least 2 species. The *Garcinia pictoria* yields a very superior kind of gamboge, and the other species an inferior sort. The gamboge is obtained from the fruit of the tree by pressure and maceration. A very common tree of the dense forest is the wild cinnamon (Cinnamomum iners) the bark of the branches of which is supposed to form part of the Cassia bark of commerce.

137 The following trees are noted for the excellence of their
313 timber or other useful qualities: The Sampige—(Champak) Mi-
314 chelia champaca—with its beautiful and sweet scented flowers; the perfection of beauty in the poetical fancy of the Coorg bard, the Ebony—(Diospyros ebenaster) *Can.* Kari-mara, the Wood-oil tree (Dipterocarpus laevis), the Kanagala tree (Dillenia pentagyna), the Jack tree (Artocarpus integrifolius—*Can.* Halasina-mara). The Iron wood (mesua ferrea) with large white fragrant flowers and very hard wood; the Indian Mahogany or White Cedar (Cedrela toona—*Can.* Bellandi-mara), the Red Cedar or Chittagong wood (Chickrassia tabularis), the timber of both trees is little inferior to Mahogany; the wild

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

Nutmeg (Myristica); the wild Cashew-nut (Anacardium occidentale—*Can.* Géru-mara); the Indian Gutta tree (Isonandra acuminata), a large tree with beautiful foliage and oil yielding nuts; the Bastard Sago (Caryota urens—*Can.* Beini-mara) from which an agreeable toddy is drawn while from the pith sago may be prepared; the Hog-plum tree (Spondias mangifera—*Can.* Ambatte-mara); the wild clove tree (Eugenia).

A most remarkable and truly majestic forest tree is the Lepurandra Saccidora, which deserves to be classed with Thomson's

> "Lofty trees, to ancient song unknown,
> The noble sons of potent heat and floods
> Prone-rushing from the clouds."

It flowers in October in very peculiar catkins, something like a common mulberry. The fruit is in size and shape like a small fig, covered with a beautiful purple coloured down. The Coorgs manufacture very curious sacks from the bark. A branch is cut corresponding to the length and diameter of the sack wanted. It is soaked a little and then beaten with clubs until the liber separates from the wood. This done, the sack formed of the bark is turned inside out and pulled down close to the extremity, where the wood is cut off leaving a thin piece to form the bottom of the sack. These sacks were formerly much used for carrying rice, some of them may be seen in the Mysore Museum. Very different in size, but of far greater importance than the sack tree, is the Poison-nut tree,—"Strychnos nux vomica"—which may be found near it. The wood of this tree is hard and durable, its leaves oval and glossy; the small greenish white flowers appear in February; the fruit is of the size of an orange and in its white harmless pulp are embedded many round flat seeds, from which the powerful poison "Strychnine" is obtained. On open sunny woodsides grow Lobelia nicotianifolia, a stout annual plant with showy white flowers in terminal racemes,

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5
Yerava AW62
Kurumba AW56

C 137 delicate light green foliage of linear lanceolate leaves a most graceful feathery appearance. When in blossom the bamboo is leafless and the extremities are covered with flowers like one large compound panicle. The seed is in size and appearance like oats or small paddy. It is eaten by the poorer classes, but considered unwholesome. The birds and rats, however, revel in the feast of plenty. The water into which bamboo seed has largely fallen is said to be particularly noxious.

C [262] [735] [823]

Y K 313 The cutting of bamboo, is a difficult task that is rarely well done by any other than those expert jungle people, the Yerawas and Kurumbas. For the purpose of cutting a single reed they manage to climb over the lower thorny mass to where the reeds branch out freely about 10 or 15 feet above the ground and cut them at that height. To level the whole Y 313 clump, the Yerawa has to cut the stem of each bamboo below and above his head, removing each piece from the thorny embrace of the rest; he thus boldly advances into the clump, and the further he progresses in his work the greater is the danger of the whole clump suddenly giving way at the slightest breeze and crushing the unfortunate intruder.

C 137 There are several kinds of bamboo, the one described is, however, the most common. The reeds of another kind are much smaller and solid and are known by the name of Male-bamboos.

C 137 • 313 One of the handsomest trees in the eastern jungles is the *Blackwood* or Dalbergia latifolia with a stem of 2 or 3 feet in diameter and 60 to 80 feet in height. It is one of the most valuable timber trees in India and little, if at all, inferior to the South American Rosewood, which it closely resembles in many particulars. Near neighbours of Blackwood are *Matti* and *Hony*. The *Matti* or Terminalia coriacea is remarkable for its excellent timber, and is easily recognised by its thick ash-coloured bark, cracked into small tablets like the scales

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

of a crocodile. Under the knotty swellings of the bark of the Matti tree small quantities of water are hidden, which the lynx-eyed Kuruba readily discovers in his jungle-wanderings during the hot season and from which providential fountains he draws a thirst-quenching draft. ⅞ The *Hony* or Kino tree (Pterocarpus marsupium) yields an excellent yellowish timber fit for exposure and a valuable brownish gum, the kino, which oozes out from the wounded stem. Chunam brought in contact with it turns bright yellow. 139 313 [312]

Teak or Tectonia grandis occupies a distinct girdle along the eastern boundary of Coorg, within the basin of the Lakshmanatirtha and in Nanjarájpatna and Yélusávirashíme taluq; but, with the exception of the Amali-topu in Kiggatnád, the teak forests in Coorg are neither so dense, nor so stately as those in Burmah, where trees of enormous size and height are found. The large and strongly nerved leaves, rough above, whitish and downy beneath, and the numerous white flowers in terminal branches on the high and many branched trunk, mark the beauty and strength of the tree. Both for house and ship building teak is the best of woods, easily worked and almost indestructible by climate or insects owing to its oily nature. Coorg teak is of most excellent quality, oily and free of heart-shake. It is a Government monopoly and sold from wood-yards at the rate of 12 Annas per cubic foot. [655]

In close proximity to teak and in an equally limited tract of dry and elevated slopes grows the *White Sandal-wood*, (Santalum album) scattered between other trees and on cultivated land. It is rather a small tree of a more or less crooked stem, but its spreading branches with tiny, light-green leaves and yellow or purple coloured small flowers give it an elegant appearance and a marked feature in the landscape. The wood is close-grained and hard, especially the duramen or heart-wood, which for these qualities and for its agreeable scent is highly prized and employed for ornamental boxes, [322]

⅞ [Errata: This should read "draught." See corrigenda sheet, Cat. 116, p. 493 -- Analyst]

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

137 card cases, paper cutters, fans, walking sticks, etc. which are
313 made chiefly in Nuggur and North Canara. Sandal-wood is
[322] also a Government monopoly and is collected at an expense
[655] of one eighth of the value of the wood, trees when from 16 to 40 years old according to the nature of the soil, where grown, are cut down; the best yield a billet of 5 inches square
[652] and 4 or 5 feet long. The wood fetches at the public auctions
[437] periodically held by Government at the cotics or wood stores,
[439] from 70 to 98 Rupees per candy of 550 avoirdupois, and is generally exported to Bombay. Natives distinguish 3 kinds according to colour: the "red sandal" (sriganda) which is the most highly scented, the "yellow sandal" (arasana ganda), and the "white sandal" (bili ganda) which possesses but a faint
314 aroma and is least prized. The chips are burnt as perfume,
[302] or reduced to powder which enters into the composition for
[303] marking the foreheads of natives. The roots, containing the greatest amount of the essential oil, are chiefly used for its production. It is heavier than water and yields an excellent
245 perfume. The sandal tree is propagated from seed and suckers, springing up from the roots.

137 A stately though not very valuable tree all over these
313 parts of the country is the *Wild Mango tree*, which towers with its lofty crown far above its humbler neighbours. But the giant of these jungles is the *Ajini* or *Wild Jack tree* (Artocarpus hirsuta), the timber of which is most useful for house and ship building. The rosy-tinted, smooth-barked *Ben-teak* or Nandi (Lagerstroemia parviflora) is reputed for its excellent timber.

137 A splendid jungle tree, when in flower in February and
314 March, is the *Red Cotton tree* or Bombax Malabaricum a very large specimen, stands in front of the Anandapur Mission Church. Its flowers are large and of a deep red colour, and the many seeded capsules contain a silky cotton, which is employed for stuffing pillows and mattresses. The staple is

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

so short as to render this so-called cotton commercially valueless. The wood is soft and spongy and of little value. Another red cotton tree of smaller size and with a prickly trunk is the Salmalia Malabarica (*Can.* Mulu yelava). The Dindul or "Conocarpus latifolius" is a fine timber tree and very frequent in the deciduous jungles. The heart-wood is of a chocolate colour and exceedingly durable. The Kurubas use it for axe-handles. When burning it emits an intense and sustained heat and is therefore highly prized for lime kilns and distilleries. The *Hedde-mara* or "Nauclea cordifolia" yields a beautiful close-grained wood resembling box; but it cannot withstand exposure to damp. Its small yellow flowers appear in November and December. The "Rottleria tinctoria" furnishes an orange dye—the kapela ranga. The *Soap-nut tree* (sapindus) which is here rather common, produces a small fruit, the pulp of which is saponaceous and used by the natives for washing. For marking their cotton clothes the pure black acrid juice of the shell of the "marking nut" is used; it is the fruit of a tree about 50 feet high, the Semecarpus Anacardium. The native ink is chiefly manufactured with the fruit or galls of the Alali-mara and sulphate of iron. This tree, the Terminalia chebula, yields excellent galls produced by insects puncturing the tender leaves. The astringent nuts bruised and mixed with molasses and chunam produce a very strong mortar. They are also largley used for tannin purposes.

On the outskirts of bamboo jungles the *Indian Coral tree* (Erythrina Indica) with its brilliant scarlet flowers may be frequently found; its soft wood is much used for toys. On account of its prickly bark the branches make good fences, and where the betel vine is cultivated this tree offers an excellent support. A very pretty tree with spreading pinnate foliage and gooseberry like seeds is the *Nelli-kai-mara* or "Emblica Officinalis." The fruit though hard is welcome to many for its thirst assuaging properties. Sometimes it is Preserved in sugar.